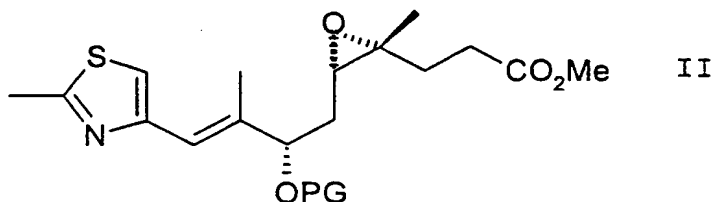


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. In a process for the production of epothilone compounds, the improvement comprising preparing said compounds by cyclization of a compound produced from an intermediate of formula II

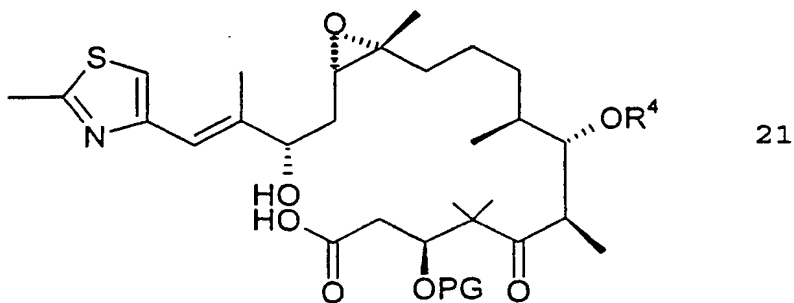


wherein PG is a protecting group.

2. The process according to claim 1, wherein PG is a TBS or TES group.

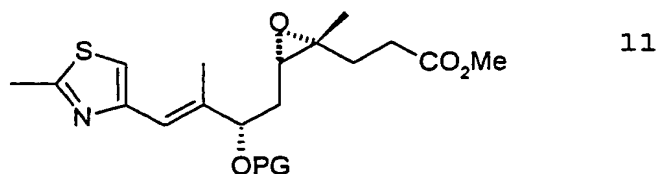
3. The process according to claim 1, wherein the compound of formula II contains a TBS group as PG, which group is changed to a TES group during the process.

4. The process according to claim 1, wherein said cyclization reaction is of a compound of the formula 21



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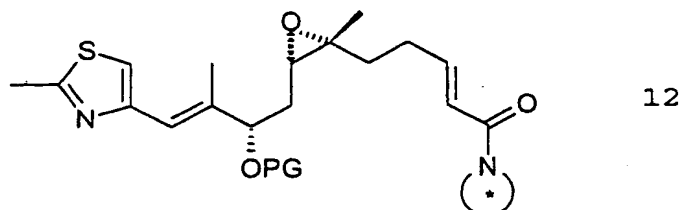
5. The process according to claim 4, wherein the compound of formula 21 is produced by a process comprising reducing a compound of formula 11



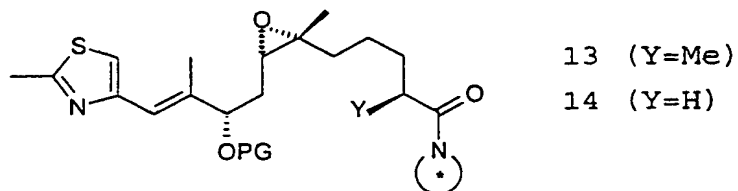
to form an aldehyde, coupling the aldehyde with a compound



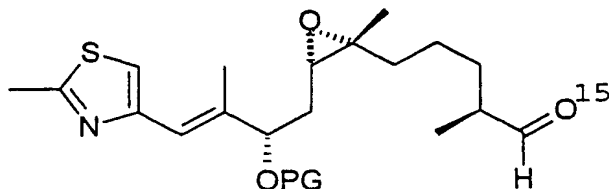
to produce an enoysultam of formula 12,



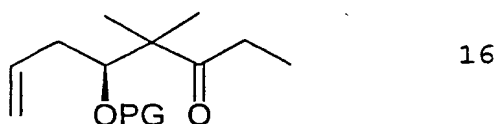
reacting enoysultam 12 with L-selectrides to produce compounds of formulae 13 and 14,



reducing sultam 13 to form aldehyde 15,

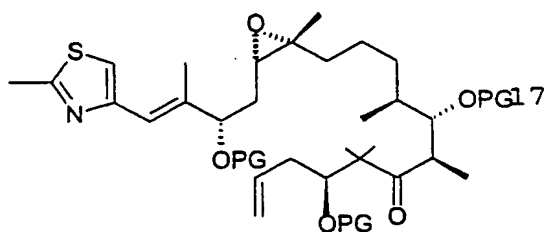


reacting 15 with ketone 16

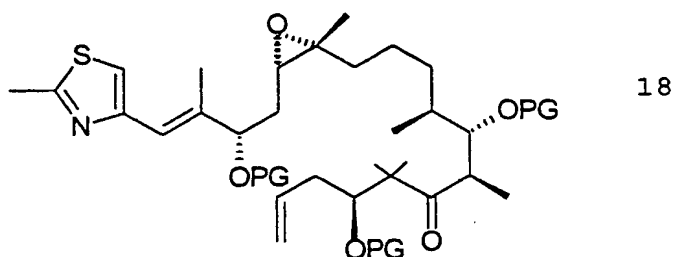


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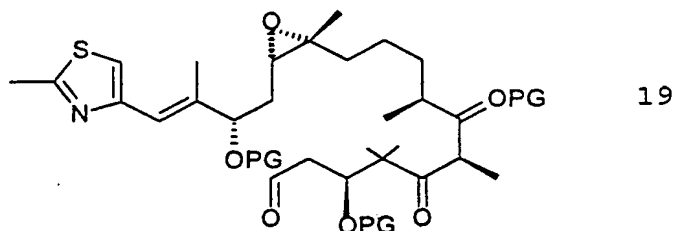
to form compound 17,



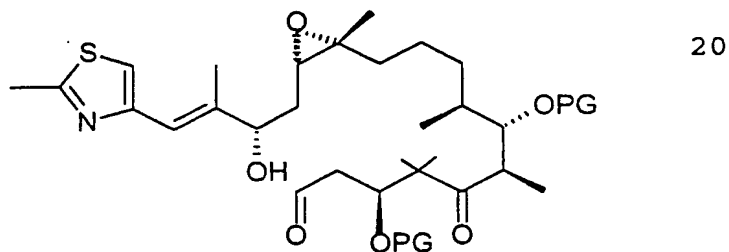
protecting the 17-OH group of compound 17 so as to produce alkene 18,



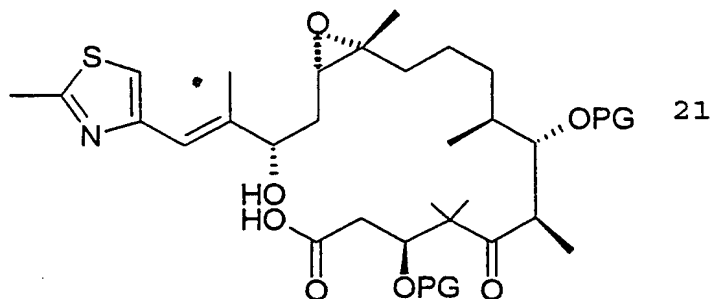
subjecting alkene 18 to dehydroxylation and glycocleavage to produce aldehyde 19,



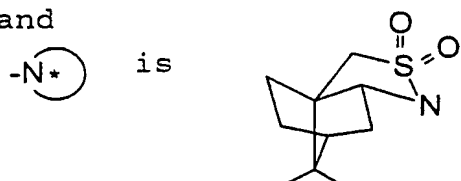
deprotecting the 15-position of aldehyde 19 to produce aldehyde 20,



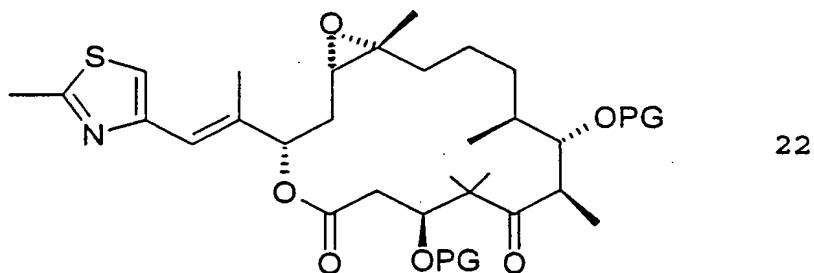
and subjecting aldehyde 20 to oxidation and macrolactonization to produce compound 21



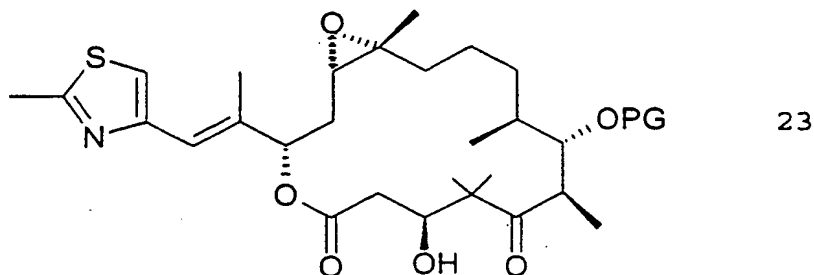
wherein each PG independently is a protecting group,
and



6. A process according to claim 4, comprising cyclizing a compound of formula 21 to produce a macrolactone of formula 22

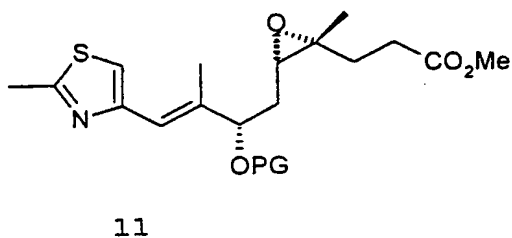
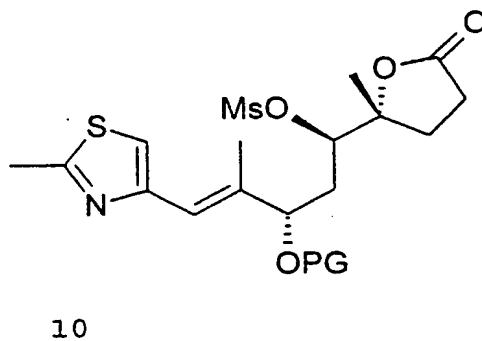
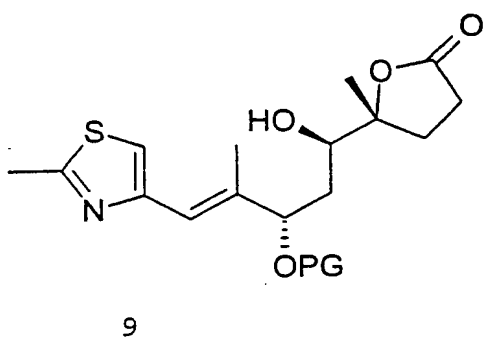
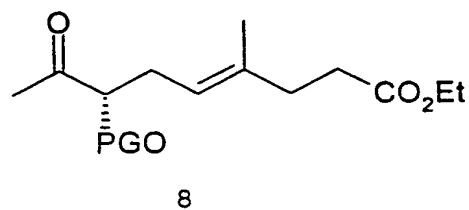
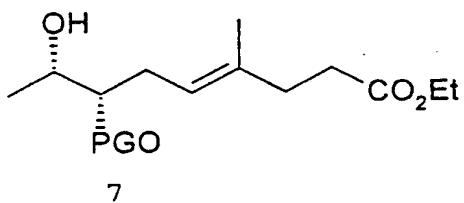
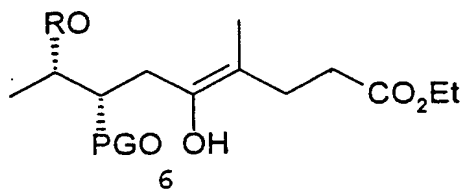
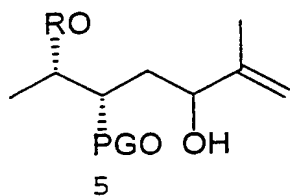


deprotecting the oxygen atom at the 3-position to form a compound of formula 23

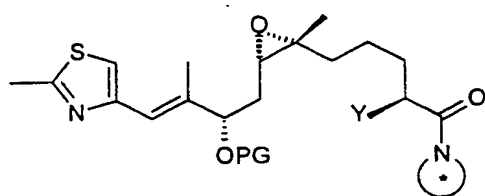
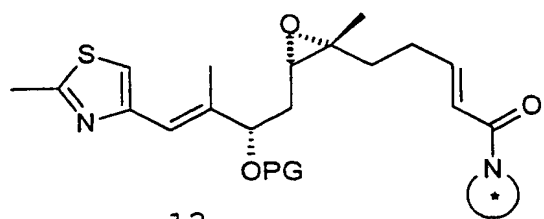


and removing the protecting group at the 7-position to form epothilone B.

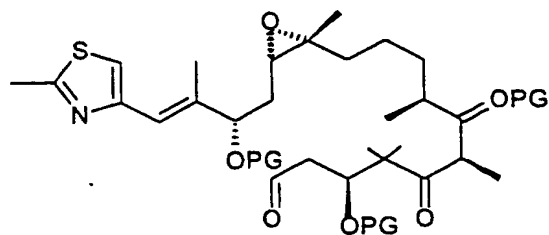
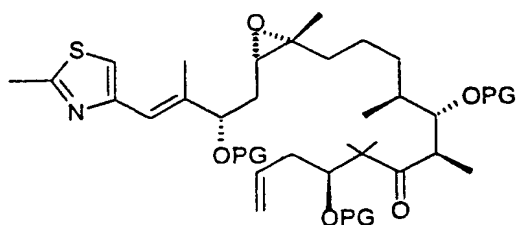
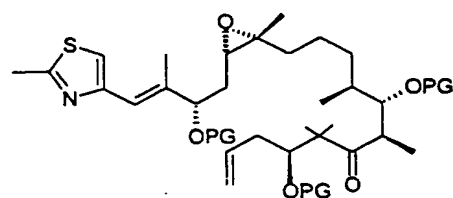
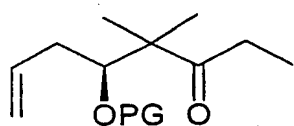
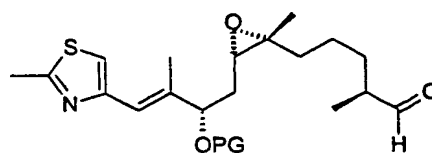
7. A compound of the formula 5 to 21



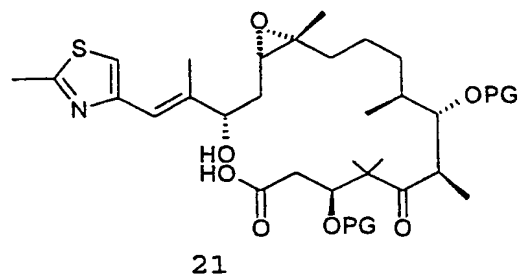
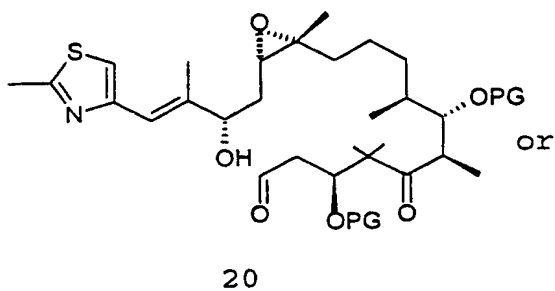
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14 (Y=H)

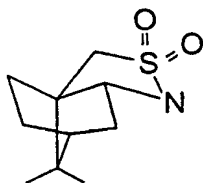


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wherein PG is a protecting group,

-N^+ is



and R is Bn or PMB.